

The Charltons Parish Council

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Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting

held on Thursday 16th May 2024 in the Reading Room, Hillway, Charlton Mackrell,
Following the Annual Parish Meeting, commencing at 7.00pm

❖ Public Question and Comments:

None present.

❖ Reports from Somerset Council (SC):

Report given by Somerset Councillor Tim Kerley in the Annual Parish Meeting.

Councillors Present:

Tamzin Elliott (Chairman)

Nick Blackledge

Alan Crawley

Kim Williams

Bob Adams (Vice-Chairman)

Susie Crang

Mike Parsons

In Attendance: The Clerk.

24/32. Election of the Chairman of the Council and receive his/her Declaration of Acceptance of office:

To elect a chairman to serve until May 2025. The 2023/24 chairman Cllr T Elliott called for nominations.

RESOLVED: One nomination was received for Cllr T Elliott, who was elected unanimously and duly signed her DAO as Chairman.

24/33. Election of the Vice Chairman of the Council:

The Council may choose to elect a Vice-Chairman to serve until May 2025.

RESOLVED: The Chairman received one nomination for Cllr B Adams who was elected unanimously.

24/34. Apologies for absence:

To receive any apologies for absence.

RESOLVED: Apologies received from Cllrs D Elliott and Ware. Somerset Councillor S Page also tendered his apologies.

24/35. Declarations of Interests:

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and NALC Model Code of Conduct adopted May 2022. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

RESOLVED: None declared.

24/36. Minutes:

To approve the Minutes of the PC meeting held on Tuesday 16th April 2024.

RESOLVED: The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

24/37. Appointment of Parish Council Representatives for 2024/25:

RESOLVED: Councillors elected as follows:

- a. Highways/Speeding – Cllrs Crawley and Parsons
- b. Footpaths – Cllrs Blackledge and T Elliott
- c. Archdeacon Brymer Trust – Cllr Adams and Mrs Denise Simpson
- d. Youth Services – Cllrs Adams and Ware
- e. Memorial Playing Field and Community Hall – Trustee no longer required since formation as a CIO.
- f. Reading Room – Cllr Crang
- g. Environmental – Cllr Crang
- h. Personnel Committee – Cllrs Blackledge, T Elliott and Parsons
- i. Community Plan Monitoring Group – Cllr Adams
- j. Conservation Areas WG – Cllrs Blackledge, Crang and Williams
- k. Flood Relief Measures WG - TBC
- l. Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) WG – Cllrs Adams, Crawley and 2 residents.
- m. Welham Field – Cllrs D Elliott, Parsons and Ware
- n. Website – The Clerk
- o. Internal Auditor – Moderamen Auditing (TBC)

24/38. Parish Council Accounts:

a. Balance of the Council’s Bank Account and Bank Reconciliation:

To receive the Council accounts and bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the PC Accounts which were received and approved and bank balances at 3rd May 2024 of Nat West Current Account £12,958.41 and Nat West Business Reserve Account £47,247.78, reconciled, approved and signed.

b. Accounts for payment:

To receive and approve a schedule of items of expenditure (incl. VAT):

- i. Martin Butt – Repair work Village Car Park £720.00
- ii. JB Electrical – Installation of Cary Fitzpaine CPAD £300.00
- iii. C Mackrell Reading Room Hire 16 Jan, 14 Feb, 19 Mar, 16 & 29 Apr £90.00
- iv. WesternWeb Ltd – set up email accounts for Cllrs & Clerk for 1 yr £86.40
- v. Moderamen Internal Audit fees £80.00
- vi. Clerk’s Allowances & Expenses £42.95
- vii. Overt Locke Ltd – aggregate for car park £17.97

RESOLVED: Items of expenditure approved unanimously.

24/39. Planning.

a. To consider the following planning applications (PA):

- i. **PA 23/02768/OUT.** Outline Application for all matters reserved except access for the erection of 3 (REVISED from 5) No. dwellings on land Os 2560 Part George Street, Charlton Adam, TA11 7AS.

Councillors agreed that the amended plans only address one of the PC’s reasons for recommending refusal of the original application. It does not address the serious concerns as detailed in the PC response dated 1st December 2023, regarding the effect of the development on the Character and Landscape of the Parish and the Highway Issues raised. It was also noted that it did not follow the guidelines as set out in the Charltons Community Plan or the issues regarding Planning History previously raised by the PC.

The existing dwellings in George Street are an eclectic mix of traditional stone and reconstituted stone-built dwellings, some thatched with a small number of modern houses and bungalows as infill. The Charltons Community Plan sets out that any new development must respect the local character, historic and natural assets of the Parish and, through design

and materials, reinforce local distinctiveness. This proposal for three large, modern, four-bedroom detached houses, extending the western boundary of the village, is completely out of character with the existing vernacular of George Street and the wider neighbourhood and does not meet the criteria detailed above.

Planning Balance and Conclusion: Whilst mindful of the 'tilted balance' it is still considered that the identified harm is not outweighed by the minimal contribution of the proposal towards the supply of housing or public benefits. The moderate economic and social benefits of the addition of three dwellings to housing supply is significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the adverse impact highlighted in the PCs initial response and reiterated above. The proposed development, therefore, constitutes unsustainable development that is contrary to policies SD1, SS1, SD2, EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) and to the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

RESOLVED: The identified harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the scheme and, as such, the Parish Council continues to strongly object to the amended outline plans and resolved unanimously to recommend **REFUSAL**. However, should the Authority choose not to accept the PC's considered recommendation to refuse this application, the dwellings should at the very least meet the guidelines set out in Para HD2 of the Charltons Community Plan and contain a proportion of two- or three-bedroom homes.

b. Somerset Council (SC) Decisions:

i. **PA 24/00536/S73.** S73 Application to vary Condition 05 (Materials) to new materials schedule dated 2024 in relation to planning approval 13/04998/FUL for Erection of a permanent dwelling in association with existing equine use and associated realignment of existing earth bank. (GR 354263/129013) at Pleasant Spot Barns, Broadacres, Charlton Adam, TA11 7BA – **APPROVED**.

24/40. Signage in the Charltons:

Update on requests received from organisations in the Parish for directional signage and request for information from the PC for retention.

RESOLVED: The Clerk reported as follows:

- a. Charlton Mackrell Reading Room. Awaiting plan for the proposed signage to be located on the village green.
- b. Charlton Mackrell School. Solution agreed with the School for a triangular school warning sign on the north side of Bonfire Lane opposite the existing sign. Awaiting SC Highways site visit for approval.
- c. Charlton Adam and Mackrell Churches. Most signs now removed. No response received.
- d. Hallr Wood. Sign approved for installation in the village car park, location to be agreed.
- e. Charltons Community Centre and Memorial Playing Field. No response.

24/41. Mis-information in Charltons Village News:

To discuss misinformation printed in the April edition of The Charltons Village News attributable to an article on the 'Village Signage Issue' and decide on appropriate action.

Due to the article on signage being factually incorrect, it raised the subject on what is the Editorial Policy.

RESOLVED: Councillor Blackledge agreed to discuss with the Editor.

24/42. Appointment of Bank Account Signatories 2024/25:

To confirm the Council's bank signatories (Current signatories: Cllrs T Elliott, Adams, Blackledge, Crawley and Parsons)

RESOLVED: Cllrs Adams, Blackledge, Crawley, T Elliott and M Parsons agreed to remain as signatories. Process for online banking to be re-instated after 'timing out' due to incorrect email address.

24/43. Council Policies, Terms of Reference, Risk Assessments:

To receive, review and adopt the following:

- a. General and Financial Risk Assessment – adopted 16 May 23, minute Ref 23/37.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the revised Risk Assessment for review, which was adopted.

- b. Assets Register – adopted 20 Jun 23, minute Ref 23/56.b.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the Assets Register for review, which was adopted.

- c. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Policy – adopted 19 Sep 23, minute ref 23/76.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the Policy for review, which was adopted.

- d. Parish Council Grants Policy – adopted 18 Jan 22, minute ref 22/08.d.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the Policy for review. Cllr Parsons agreed to further review the Policy for consideration at a future meeting.

24/44. Insurance Renewal 2024/25:

To receive, review and approve the insurance policy and quotes:

- a. Zurich Municipal renewal quote £459.00

- b. Clear Insurance quote £592.39

RESOLVED: Quotes received, reviewed and councillor agreed unanimously to renew with Zurich Municipal.

24/45. Charltons War Memorial:

To consider report and estimate for repair and restoration from Dominic Blackledge.

(Cllr Blackledge declared an interest as the father of Dominic Blackledge)

RESOLVED: The Clerk agreed to ask Davis Builders and Cyril Harris if they would like to submit a quote for the work.

24/46. End of Year Audit 2023/24:

- a. **Internal Audit Report for 2023/24:**

To receive report and resolve on any recommendations.

RESOLVED: The Annual Internal Report, carried out by Mr S Pritchard, was received with recommendations noted.

- i. The PC's application for online banking had been reinstated.
- ii. The Clerk's salary would be paid net with PAYE paid monthly to HMRC by the PC once online banking had been set up.
- iii. Bank Reconciliation revised and implemented as recommended.
- iv. Online draft minutes to be replaced upon approval.
- v. Assets to be recorded ex-VAT on the Register.
- vi. Reserves are reviewed prior to setting the precept, however, the PC to consider a separate agenda item for the November PC meeting.
- vii. Risk Assessment revised and approved.

- b. **Annual Governance Statement 2023/24:**

Members to resolve upon the response to the annual governance statement.

RESOLVED: The Annual Governance Statement was considered, approved and signed.

- c. **Annual Accounting Statements 2023/24:**

To approve the annual accounting statement

RESOLVED: The Annual Accounting Statements were considered, approved and signed.

- d. **Confirmation of Public Rights Period:**

RESOLVED: The Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), set the date for the exercise of public rights to commence on Monday 3rd June and end on Friday 12th July 2024, which would be published on the parish website with details of the arrangements.

24/47. Community Flood Action Group and Emergency Planning:

Update.

RESOLVED: Cllr Adams reported that the Community Flood Action Group (CFAG) had met with Dr Paul Ellison from the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). The SRA through the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) would liaise with the relevant landowners to investigate implementing flood mitigation measures to reduce flows in Bull Brook during periods of heavy rainfall. The PC had also published an article on riparian ownership in the Charltons News to help inform landowners in the Parish.

The PC discussed the option of producing an Emergency or Action Plan to cover all possible risks, including flooding and a major train accident and who would lead in its production.

RESOLVED: Cllrs Adams, Blackledge, Crawley and Parsons agreed to meet to discuss.

24/48. Maintenance of Public Rights of Way:

Somerset Council Questionnaire for completion by 31 May 24.

RESOLVED: Councillors discussed and approved response for submission by the Clerk.

24/49. Items for Report and Future Business.

a. The Clerk reported that she had received a request from a resident for assistance in asking SC to look into issuing a Tree Preservation Order on an oak tree in the garden of the Fox and Hounds Inn. Councillors considered that as the tree was actually a field maple SC may not have responded.

Action: The Clerk agreed to contact the resident and suggest that she re-submits her request to SC confirming that the tree is a field maple. If there is no further response, the Clerk would take her request up with Phil Poulton, SC Tree Officer.

Next meeting: to be held on Tuesday 18th June 2024, 7.15PM in The Reading Room, Hillway, Charlton Mackrell.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed:

Dated: